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SUBJECT: SECURITY COUNCIL EXPANSION: THE FUTURE OF THE  
OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP

REF: USUN 1488

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Bolton, Permanent Representative, for  
reasons 1.4 b,d.

**¶1.** (U) The Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Security Council Reform (officially "The OEWG on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council") will meet on Friday, September 8 to approve this year's report and to recommend continuing the working group's activities in the 61st GA Session. The draft report and recommendations have been circulated to Member States and are available through the UN Document System (A/AC.247/2006/L.1).

**¶2.** (C) Dutch Poloff (protect) told USUN that a number of the strongest advocates for expansion of the Council were pressing the President of the General Assembly (PGA) and the two vice-chairs to abolish the OEWG and replace it with a working group like those created to facilitate the negotiation of the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. (Note: Dutch comments indicated that they - as one of the vice-chairs - might be sympathetic to these arguments.) The argument is that the OEWG has outlived its usefulness, having met every year since its establishment in December 1993. They also argue that, as the call for Council expansion was included in the 2005 Summit Outcome Document, the issue should be treated in the same manner as other post-Summit initiatives (HRC, PBC, Mandate Review, ECOSOC reform, etc). On each of these other issues, PGA Eliasson established a working group of the GA and assigned two co-chairs to facilitate the process.

**¶3.** (C) Those advocating for the new format claim that the OEWG's consensus-based rules effectively block agreement on the most difficult issues regarding expansion. They believe that a working group format would provide a venue for actual negotiations on resolution text, similar to that which produced the HRC and PBC. And, citing the vote required to create the HRC, they argue that absolute consensus should not be allowed to "block progress." While there does not yet appear to be consensus to replace the OEWG with a "Summit follow-up working group", we note that the report to be considered on September 8 includes a call to consider "the mandate and functions" of the OEWG (para 17e) which has not been present in previous years' text and may present an opening to advance this proposal. The Uniting For Consensus countries, including Pakistan, Italy and Canada, will fiercely oppose inclusion of this language.

**¶4.** (C) Comment. USUN is working quietly with like-minded delegations to ensure the report language adopted on September 8 is consistent with previous years' text and the consensus-based OEWG continues in the 61st Session. The creation of a "facilitated" working group would overstate the

membership's current interest in tackling the subject or the likelihood of a successful negotiated outcome. More importantly, these working groups, as our experience of the past year amply demonstrates, undermine Member States' control of the negotiation process. End Comment.

BOLTON